

Message Text

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 01 STATE 224634

46

ORIGIN SCI-06

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 DODE-00 L-03 NSF-04 CIAE-00 INR-10

NSAE-00 RSC-01 IO-14 EB-11 COME-00 PM-07 FAA-00 EUR-25

NEA-10 AF-10 EA-11 NASA-04 PRS-01 /118 R

DRAFTED BY SCI/SAS:WACHAPIN:VML

APPROVED BY SCI/SAM:WACHAPIN

L/SCI:EMAURER (INFO)

NSF:GTESI

NEA:SBUTCHER

----- 123868

R 141557Z NOV 73

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO ALL EAST ASIAN AND PACIFIC DIPLOMATIC POSTS

ALL EUROPEAN DIPLOMATIC POSTS

ALL NEAR EASTERN AND SOUTH ASIAN DIPLOMATIC POSTS

USINT ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY RABAT

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

AMEMBASSY TUNIS

USMISSION GENEVA

AMCONSUL MONTREAL

UNCLAS STATE 224634

GENEVA FOR WMO, MONTREAL FOR ICAO

E.O. 11652:N/A

TAGSP:TSPA:

SUBJ: ESCAPE OF GHOST BALLOON

1. ON NOVEMBER 10, 1973, AT 1623 GMT A CONSTANT LEVEL BALLOON FLIGHT WAS MADE BY THE NCAR GLOBAL ATMOSPHERIC MEASUREMENT PROGRAM (GAMP) GROUP IN BOULDER. THE FLIGHT WAS DESIGNED TO TEST THE PRODUCTION VERSION OF THE SOLAR PANEL.

2. OWING TO AN OVERSIGHT IN TEST PROCEDURE, THE BALLOON
UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 02 STATE 224634

IS NOW OUT OF CONTROL, AND WILL PROBABLY FOLLOW THE WINDS

AROUND THE NORTHERN HEMISPHERE UNTIL IT FAILS.

3. THE BALLOON IS FLOATING AT 14KM ALTITUDE (ABOUT 46,000 FEET) WELL ABOVE COMMERCIAL JET AIR LANES. AT TEMPERATE LATITUDES, ITS ALTITUDE WILL NOT VARY BY MORE THAN 300 METERS FROM 14 KM, UNLESS IT FAILS AND DESCENDS TO THE GROUND. THE INSTRUMENT PACKAGE CONTAINS A SOLAR PANEL AND

DEVICES TO MONITOR THE PANEL'S TEMPERATURE AND CURRENT. THE PAYLOAD WEIGHS 600 GRAMS. THE SYSTEM IS WELL WITHIN US/FRENCH AIRCRAFT SAFETY STANDARDS. THE PAYLOAD'S TRANSMITTER IS AT 15.022 MHZ. IT TRANSMITS BY INTERNATIONAL MORSE CODE A PATTERN IN WHICH THE IDENTIFICATION CODE LETTERS DR ARE TRANSMITTED THREE TIMES FOLLOWED BY FOUR GROUPS OF THREE LETTERS EACH, WITH EACH GROUP ITSELF BEING

REPEATED THREE TIMES. A SAMPLE TRANSMISSION, WHICH LASTS 3.5 MINUTES, MIGHT BE DR DR DR SOW SOW SOW KWU KWU KWU OSD OSD OSD URU URU URU. ALL LETTERS USED HAVE THREE BITS -- THAT IS A TOTAL OF THREE DOTS OR DASHES.

4. THE PACKAGE HAS NO LOCATING DEVICE (SUCH AS ARE CARRIED ON REGULAR GHOST BALLOONS) AND IT CANNOT BE LOCATED ACCURATELY EXCEPT BY DIRECTION-FINDING SYSTEMS SUCH AS THOSE OPERATED BY THE FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION IN HAWAII AND THE CONTINENTAL US. NCAR'S VERY ROUGH ESTIMATE, BASED ON NORMAL WINDS IS THAT AT 1900 GMT ON NOVEMBER 12, 1973, THE BALLOON WAS NEAR 40 DEGREES NORTH, 60 DEGREES WEST (OVER THE NORTH ATLANTIC) AND WAS MOVING EASTWARD AT ABOUT ONE DEGREE PER HOUR. IT THEREFORE SHOULD REACH THE EUROPEAN CONTINENT IN ABOUT TWO DAYS (NOVEMBER 14, 1973).

5. POSTS IN THEIR DISCRETION SHOULD BRING THIS INFORMATION TO THE ATTENTION OF THE HOST GOVERNMENTS. RUSH

UNCLASSIFIED

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: METEOROLOGICAL BALLOONS, AIRSPACE VIOLATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 14 NOV 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973STATE224634
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: WACHAPIN:VML
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t19731134/aaaaayqq.tel
Line Count: 96
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ORIGIN SCI
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: boyleja
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 01 FEB 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <01-Feb-2002 by elbezeff>; RELEASED <01-Feb-2002 by chappeld>; APPROVED <07 FEB 2002 by boyleja>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: ESCAPE OF GHOST BALLOON
TAGS: TSPA, US
To: EA POSTS MULTIPLE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005